

inhabited by this bird in the island of Trinidad, and presented to him by the Hon. Arthur Gordon, C.M.Z.S., Governor of the island.

The egg was elliptical in shape and pure white in colour, the larger axis measuring 1·7 inch, and the smaller 1·2.

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The following papers were read:—

1. On Two New Australian Birds.  
By JOHN GOULD, Esq., F.R.S.

One of the many results which attend the progress of colonization over the great country of Australia is the bringing to light of new species in every department of zoological and botanical science. Whether the explorer proceeds towards the centre of this vast region, or in the direction of the as yet but little-known northern coast, some new bird is sure to be brought under our notice; and thus, through the exertions of the earlier settlers and the zeal of public officers, Northern Queensland has yielded many fine species previously unknown, some of greater interest than others. That the supply from this quarter is not yet exhausted seems evident from the fact that we rarely examine a fresh collection thence without finding therein either a new species or a specimen in such a state of plumage as to induce an anxious desire to see an example of it in its full beauty. The next collection that arrives probably adds something to our knowledge of the subject; and a third furnishes us with all we desire respecting it. For some years past I have been treasuring up all the specimens I could obtain of the little Bronze Cuckoo of Cape York, under the impression that it would ultimately prove to be distinct from the species of the same form inhabiting New South Wales, Western Australia, and Tasmania; and I have now before me four, exhibiting a uniformity of characterization which distinguishes them from all their congeners, however closely allied. To the unpractised eye they would appear to be identical with one or other of the previously described species; and a cursory observer might suppose that the Australian members of this genus are identical with those inhabiting the islands to the northward of that country. This, however, I venture to say, is not the case, and I shall here point out in what particulars the bird from the Cape-York peninsula differs from the rest. In size it is rather smaller than the one or more inhabiting the southern coast of Australia, but at the same time has a stouter bill, in which respect it somewhat resembles the Port-Essington *Chrysococcyx minutillus*; it differs, however, from that and every other species in the rich buff colouring of the under surface of the wings or the basal portions of the primaries. Moreover a rufous tint pervades the upper surface; and the rufous hue of the tail is of a deeper colour, all the feathers, except the two central ones, being of a rich rusty fawn-colour, and the outer one on each side only marked

with spots or bands of black and white; a similar mark of black and white also occurs on the tips of the three other lateral feathers. In some individuals (probably immature) the feathers of the scapularies are indistinctly barred near the shoulder with the bronzy green and buff seen in some of the extra-Australian species of the genus, but which I have not observed to exist in any other examples from that country. It would not have been necessary to give such minute details respecting this little Cuckoo, were it not most difficult to diagnose the members of this genus of parasitic birds, respecting which we have yet much to learn, particularly with regard to the colouring of their eggs, which are frequently totally different from each other and from those of the *Maluri*, *Acanthizæ*, and other birds in whose nests they are deposited. The young, too, are most puzzling; for they do not appear to follow the law which obtains in the young of the true Cuckoos (genus *Cuculus*), and, instead of being strongly barred like them, they are coloured uniformly, the outer tail-feathers only being barred with black and white.

Not having the opportunity or sufficient materials at hand to clear up these points, I have requested Mr. Ramsay of New South Wales to investigate those of the southern coast; and he will doubtless be most accurate in his statement as to the period when the throat and under surface becomes barred. That this takes place very soon after the birds leave the nest appears to be certain; at least I have specimens now before me which justify such an opinion. Has not my friend Professor Schlegel described a little Cuckoo in this state? And if so, has he not been deceived by the unusual state of plumage?

The specific appellation I propose for the Cape York *Chryso-coccyx* is *russata*, from the rusty hue of the under surface of the primaries.

Besides the Bronze Cuckoos, many of the birds of the Cape-York district differ from allied species inhabiting other parts of Australia; I may instance the *Maluri*, the *Meliphagæ*, &c. There also we find a beautiful and apparently very common *Pitta*, closely assimilating in colour, but in colour alone, to the *P. strepitans*; and I seldom receive a letter from my ornithological friends in Australia in which inquiry is not made as to whether it has been named. By more than one have I been favoured with the opinion that it is distinct from its near ally; yet up to the present time no specific appellation has, I believe, been assigned to it.

Having lately had a great number of specimens forwarded to me which all agree in being of a smaller size and in having the under surface of a deeper buff, I propose, notwithstanding the opinion given in my 'Handbook,' to characterize it as distinct, and at the same time to assign to it a name (*simillima*) which shall mark its affinity to the older known species. It would be interesting to ascertain the exact range of the two birds, and at what part of Australia they inosculate. One thing is certain; no example of *Pitta simillima* has yet been found in the brushes of New South Wales, where, on the other hand, the *P. strepitans*, which has never been found at Cape York, is abundant.

**CHRYSOCOCCYX RUSSATA, Gould.**

Head, all the upper surface, and wings pale shining rusty bronze ; under surface white, crossed by numerous bands of bronzy brown ; a wash of rufous across the breast, most apparent or defined on the sides in front of the shoulders ; under wing-coverts barred like the breast ; base of the primaries and secondaries deep fawn-colour ; tail deep rufous, the two centre feathers glossed with bronze, the lateral feather on each side with three double spots, the upper half black, in the form of a crescent, the lower round and white, a similar spot on the tip of the inner web of each of the next three feathers on each side, but with the white greatly diminishing as they approach the centre ; bill black ; legs and feet olive.

Total length  $5\frac{3}{4}$  inches, bill  $\frac{5}{8}$ , wing  $3\frac{1}{2}$ , tail  $2\frac{5}{8}$ , tarsi  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Hab.* Cape-York district of Queensland, Australia.

**PITTA SIMILLIMA, Gould.**

Crown deep ferruginous, with a narrow stripe of black down the centre ; on the chin a large spot of black, terminating in a point on the front of the neck, uniting with a broad band on each side of the head, encircling the crown and terminating in a broad rounded point at the base of the neck ; back and wings pure olive-green ; shoulders and lesser wing-coverts bright metallic cerulean blue ; across the rump a band of the same colour ; upper tail-coverts and tail black, the latter tipped with dark olive-green ; primaries black, becoming paler at the tip ; near the base of the fourth, fifth, and sixth a small spot of white ; sides of the neck, throat, breast, and flanks buff ; on the centre of the abdomen a patch of black ; vent and under tail-coverts scarlet ; irides dark brown ; bill brown ; feet flesh-colour.

Total length  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches, bill  $1\frac{1}{8}$ , wing  $4\frac{3}{8}$ , tail  $1\frac{3}{4}$ , tarsi  $1\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Hab.* Cape-York district of Queensland, Australia.

2. Monograph of the Species of Worms belonging to the Subclass *Gephyrea* ; with a Notice of such Species as are contained in the Collection of the British Museum.  
By W. BAIRD, M.D., F.R.S., F.L.S., &c.

(Plates IX., X., XI.)

## Subclass GEPHYREA\*.

*Gephyrea*, Quatrefages, Ann. des Sciences Nat. 3rd ser. Zool. tom. vii. p. 340, 1847 ; Hist. Nat. des Annelés, Annélides et Géphyréens, tom. ii. pt. 2. p. 563, 1865 ; Ehlers in Zeitschrift für wissenschaft. Zool. Band xi. Heft 2. p. 205, 1861.

*Rhyngodea*, suborder *Proctucha*, tribe *Sipunculidea*, Diesing, Syst.

\* γέφυρα, bridge.